

**DAY 26: Contemplation****JESUS GOES UP TO THE TEMPLE  
AT THE AGE OF TWELVE [272]****Placing Oneself in the Presence of God***Preparatory Prayer:*

[46] ...to ask grace of God our Lord, that all my intentions, actions, and operations may be purely ordered to the service and praise of His Divine Majesty.

*History:*

[272] SAINT LUKE WRITES IN CHAPTER 2, 41-50.

First: Christ our Lord, at the age of twelve years, went up from Nazareth to Jerusalem.

Second: Christ our Lord remained in Jerusalem, and His relatives did not know it.

Third: After three days they found Him disputing in the temple, seated in the midst of the doctors; and when His parents asked Him where He had been, He answered: *(Did you not know that I must be about the things of my Father?)*

*“Now His parents went every year to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to the feast, as was the custom. When those days were completed and they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, and His parents did not know it. Supposing Him to be in the caravan, they went a day’s journey, looking for Him among relatives and acquaintances; and when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem in search of Him. And it happened that after three days they found Him in the Temple, seated in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were amazed at His wisdom and His answers. When they saw Him, they were astonished, and His mother said to Him: ‘Son, why have you done this to us? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in anguish.’ And He said to them: ‘Why were you looking for Me? Did you not know that I must be about the things of My Father?’ But they did not understand what He said to them.” (Luke 2:41-50)*

*Composition of Place:*

To imagine the Temple of Jerusalem, the feast of the Passover, which was one of those in which the Jews were obliged to participate; to imagine Mary, who always accompanied Joseph; to imagine all the people who arrive, the Holy Family; how Jesus remains behind when His parents are already returning with the caravan; where He is, with whom He is; and then when Joseph and Mary begin to search for the child, even perhaps the desperation they must have experienced at not finding Him; the scene when they return to the temple, how they find Jesus. To listen to the dialogue between Jesus and His parents, to the wisdom contained therein.

**Petition:**

[104] ...here it will be to ask for interior knowledge of the Lord, who for me has become man, so that I may love Him more and follow Him more.

To try to understand what Jesus Christ sought with His answers, with His actions, the purpose of each one of them; to enter into the heart and the intelligence of Jesus Christ.

**Body of the Meditation**

If we analyze this scene proposed by Luke, according to the account of the Virgin Mary, we will see that it contains in parallel all the details of the death and resurrection of Christ. We see that, from the beginning of His life until the end, Jesus is concerned with faithfully fulfilling the will of His Father, even in the smallest details.

- a) The Child Jesus is lost in Jerusalem. And Jesus will die in Jerusalem.
- b) The Child Jesus is lost during a feast of Passover. And Jesus will die during a feast of Passover.
- c) The Child Jesus is lost for three days until they find Him again. When Jesus dies, He will disappear for three days until He is seen again, risen.
- d) In order to be lost in Jerusalem, the Child Jesus had to “go up” from Galilee. In order to die in Jerusalem, Jesus had to “go up” from Galilee. (Luke 18:31)
- e) Faced with the anguish of His parents, the Child Jesus tells them that His loss “is necessary.” Faced with the anguish of His disciples, Jesus tells them that His death “is necessary.” (Luke 9:22; 13:33)
- f) When Jesus explains the reason for His loss, His parents “did not understand these words.” When Jesus explains the reason for His Passion, His disciples “did not understand these words.” (Luke 9:45)
- g) When Jesus is lost, His parents, who go out to look for Him, receive the reproach: “Why were you looking for Me?” When Jesus dies, the angels will reproach the women: “Why do you seek the living among the dead?” (Luke 24:5)
- h) The Child says that He separates Himself from His parents in order to be with His Father. Jesus will say that He dies in order to be with His Father. (Luke 23:46)

Therefore, we see the beautiful parallel that exists between the loss of Jesus in the temple and the death of Jesus Christ in Jerusalem, between the finding of the Child Jesus in the temple and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Saint Luke wishes to show us how there exists a perfect unity between the beginning and the end of the life of Jesus Christ: everything is a constant desire to do the will of God.

When His parents found Jesus, they asked Him why He had done this. He, with the simplicity and logic of children, wished to say to them: “And why were you looking for Me? One only searches for what is lost, and I was not lost. I was where I had to be: in the house of My Father. This is My mission.”

We understand this well. Jesus wished to tell His parents that He already had to be concerned with the things of His Father. He could not waste time. He was only twelve years old, and He was already taking charge of this. He could not wait until later, or until He was older, or until He was baptized. Or until He had achieved a certain social or economic status. Or until He reached the next SMART goal on his list. No. He took advantage of the first opportunity He had to fulfill the mission that God had entrusted to Him: to be with Him and to live in His presence.

We Christians have the same Father, and therefore the same concerns and the same mission as Jesus, and the things of God and of the Church cannot always wait until tomorrow. Nevertheless, how little we concern ourselves with the things of God: with fulfilling His commandments, with living the faith and the life of prayer deeply, with charity toward those most in need, with heartfelt forgiveness of those who have hurt us. We leave everything for tomorrow. There are too many “tomorrows” in our lives. Too many postponements, waiting for when we will have time... a time that perhaps will never come!

For salvation to be effective, we must begin here and now to concern ourselves with the things of God and with the salvation of our soul. This was the great lesson that Jesus left us when He was barely twelve years old. Let us assume the responsibility of being children of God; let us be living witnesses before the world of this desire that Jesus had: “to be about the things of My Father”; let us fulfill the mission that God has for each one of us.

#### **Colloquy:**

Let us end this meditation with a colloquy with the Holy Family, a colloquy also with the Virgin Mary, to try to understand the feelings she experienced upon finding the child. Let us ask her to help us meditate, as she did in her heart, on the meaning of Jesus’ words:

*“to be about the things of God” and “to be in the house of God”*

Let us also ask Jesus Christ to give us awareness to occupy ourselves with the things of God, to “seek first the Kingdom of God,” and let us conclude with the *Soul of Christ* prayer, asking for this grace.

#### **Anima Christi —Soul of Christ Prayer**

*Soul of Christ, sanctify me. Body of Christ, save me. Blood of Christ, inebriate me. Water from the side of Christ, wash me. Passion of Christ, strengthen me. O Good Jesus, hear me. Within your wounds hide me. Permit me not to be separated from you. From the wicked foe, defend me. At the hour of my death, call me and bid me come to you. That with your saints I may praise you For ever and ever. Amen.*